

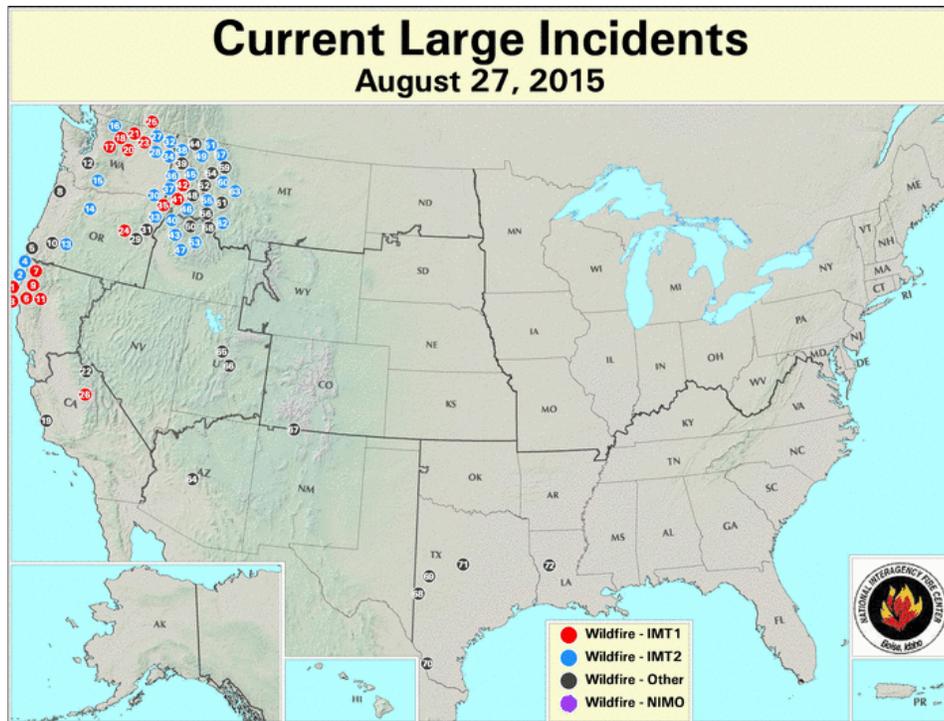
# Water and Climate Update

August 27, 2015

The Natural Resources Conservation Service produces this weekly report using data and products from the National Water and Climate Center and information provided by other agencies. The report focuses on current precipitation, seasonal snowpack, temperature, and drought conditions in the U.S.

Weekly Highlight .....	1	Drought .....	8
Precipitation .....	2	Other Climatic and Water Supply Indicators .....	11
Temperature.....	7	Short- and Long-Range Forecasts.....	15

## Weekly Highlight: Long-term warm, dry conditions fuel massive western wildfires



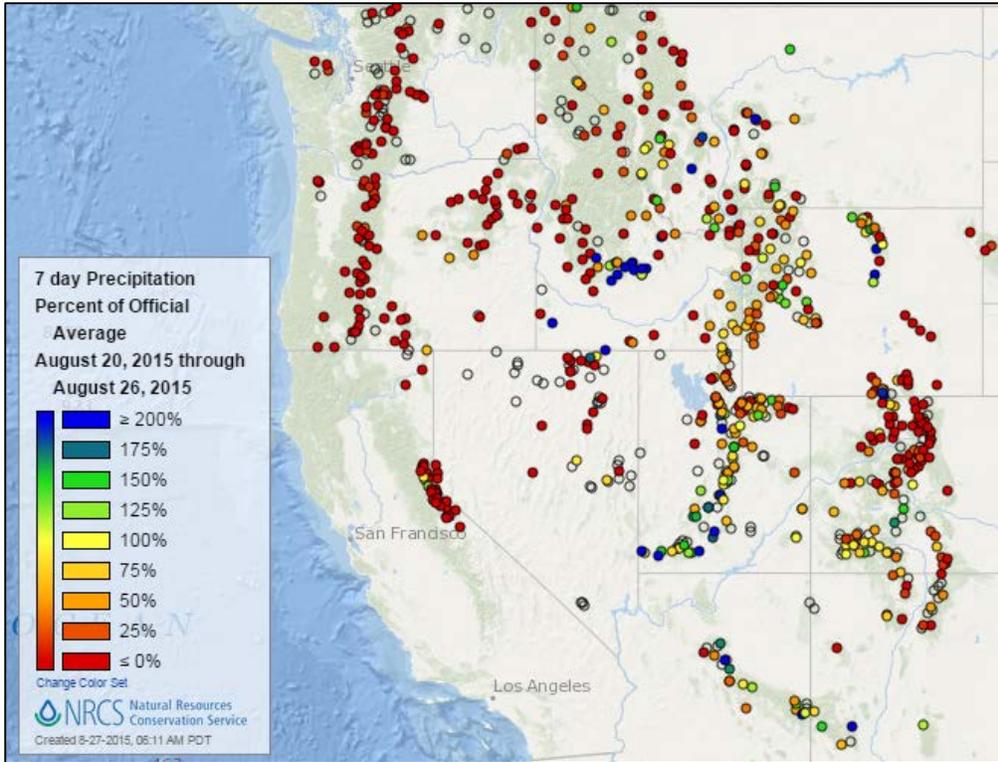
[National Interagency Fire Center News: August 27, 2015:](#) “More than 28,000 firefighters and support personnel are battling wildfires across the West. Currently 66 wildfires have burned nearly 1.7 million acres. Today, 68 firefighters from Australia and New Zealand are being deployed to incidents in Oregon and Washington. Two hundred soldiers from the 17th Field Artillery Brigade based out of Fort Lewis, Washington are deployed in Washington state.

Four MAFFS C-130 Airtankers are assigned to McClellan Airfield in Sacramento, California and two MAFFS C-130 Airtankers are assigned to Channel Islands, California in support of wildland fire operations.

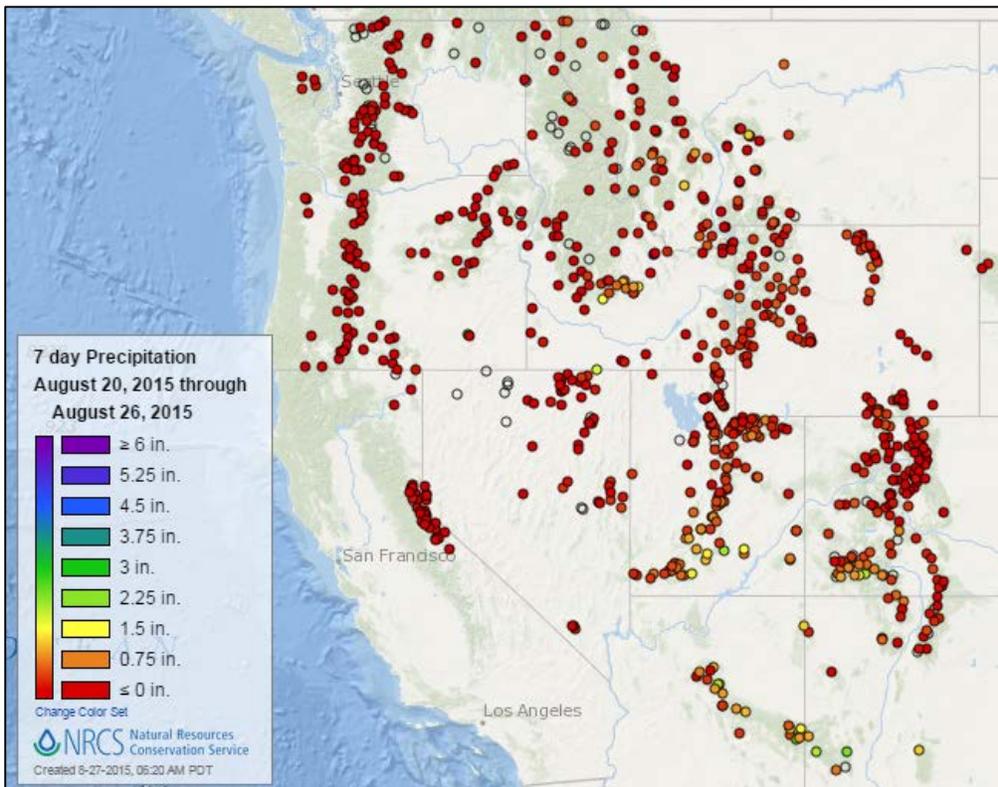
Five wildland fire suppression crews and one CL-415 scooper group from Ontario, Canada and one Convair 580 airtanker group from both Saskatchewan and Alberta are supporting fire suppression efforts in the Northern Rockies Area. Fifty-eight fireline management personnel from Alberta and Ontario, Canada are assigned to support large fires in the Northern Rockies Area.”

# Precipitation

## Last 7 Days, Western Mountain Sites (NRCS SNOTEL)

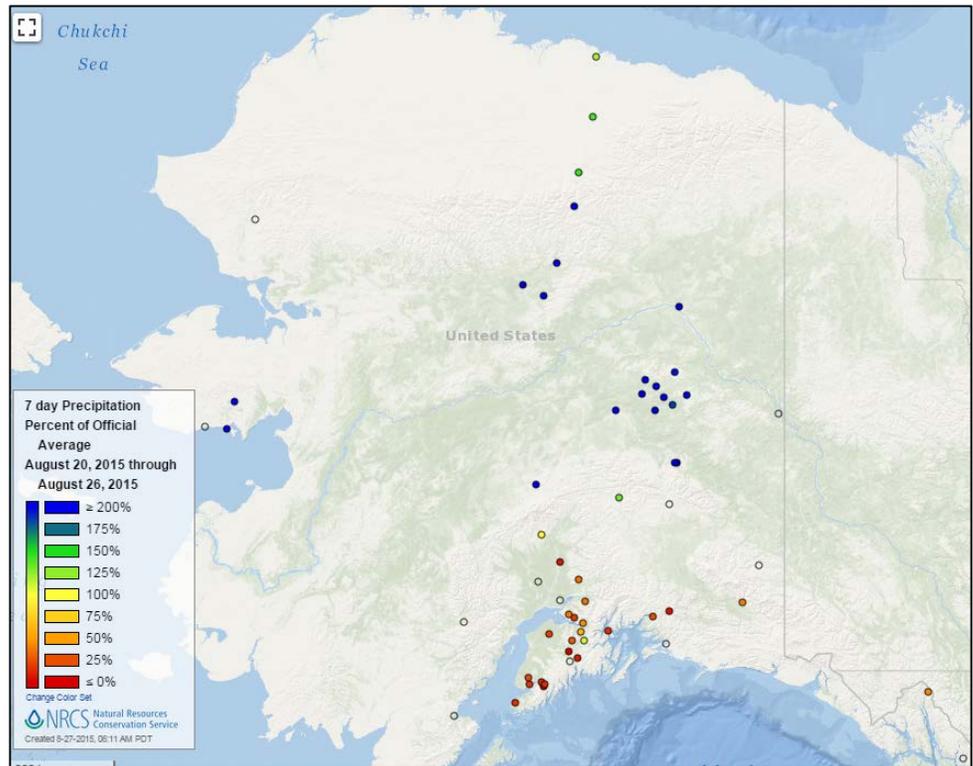


The [precipitation percent of average](#) map shows seasonally high precipitation in central Idaho, southern Utah, and a few stations in other states. Primarily dry conditions prevailed elsewhere.

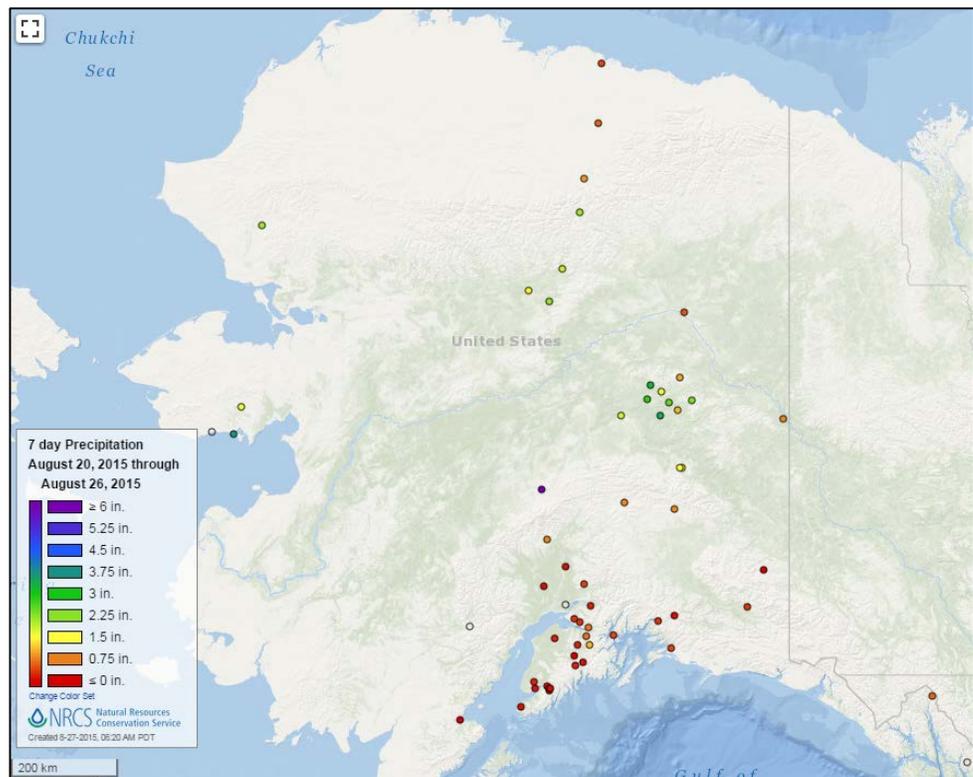


The [total precipitation](#) map shows up to two inches of precipitation in some locations in Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona.

The Alaska [precipitation percent of average](#) map indicates highly variable precipitation over the state, with central and northern areas well above average and southern areas well below average.



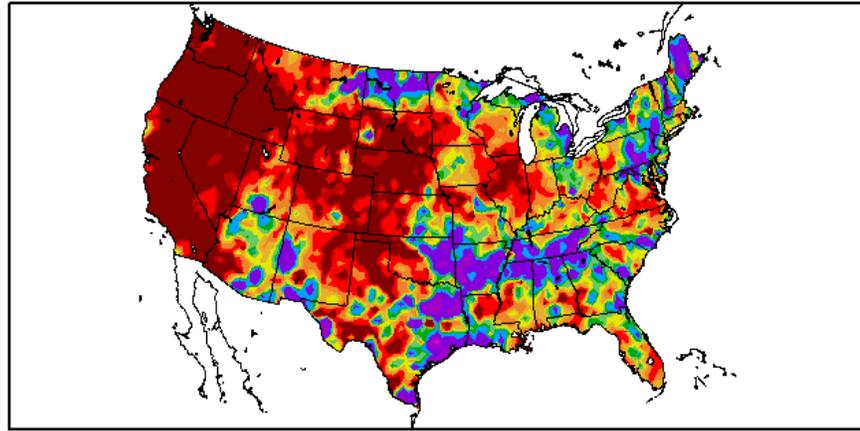
The Alaska [total precipitation](#) map shows the amount at stations receiving precipitation was generally less than two inches. Heavier precipitation was reported in central Alaska.



Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

The [percent of normal precipitation](#) map shows precipitation in the northern Plains, and the southwest, northeast, and south-central areas of the country. Much of the West and central Plains states were dry.

Percent of Normal Precipitation (%)  
8/20/2015 - 8/26/2015

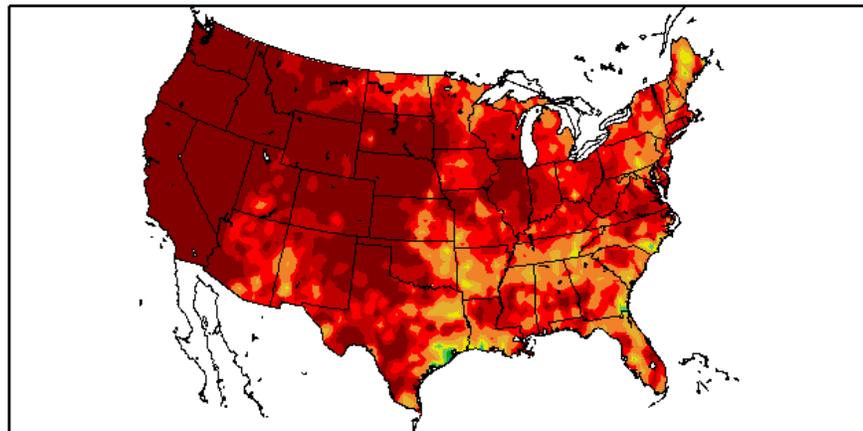


Generated 8/27/2015 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

In the [7-day total precipitation](#) map, very little, if any, precipitation occurred over much of the West, with some isolated areas of higher precipitation in the upper Midwest and in the eastern U.S., especially in coastal areas of Texas and the southern Atlantic states.

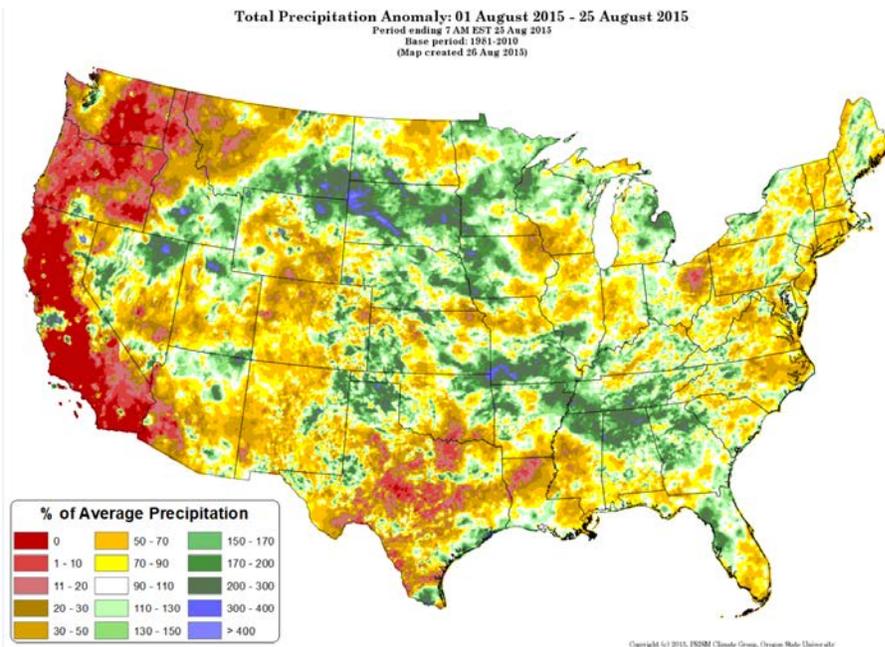
Precipitation (in)  
8/20/2015 - 8/26/2015



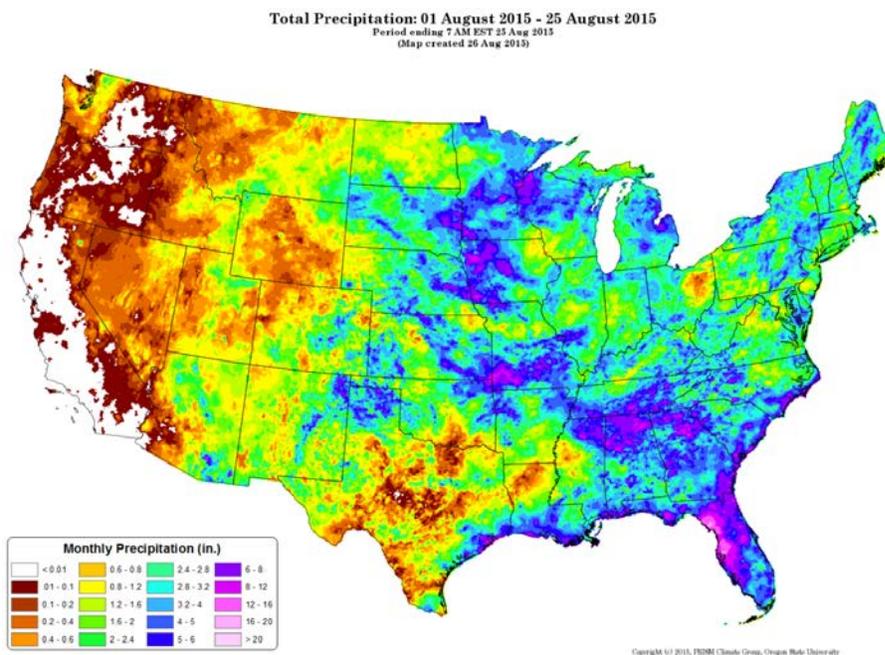
Generated 8/27/2015 at HPRCC using provisional data.

Regional Climate Centers

Month-to-Date, PRISM Preliminary, All available data including SNOTEL and NWS



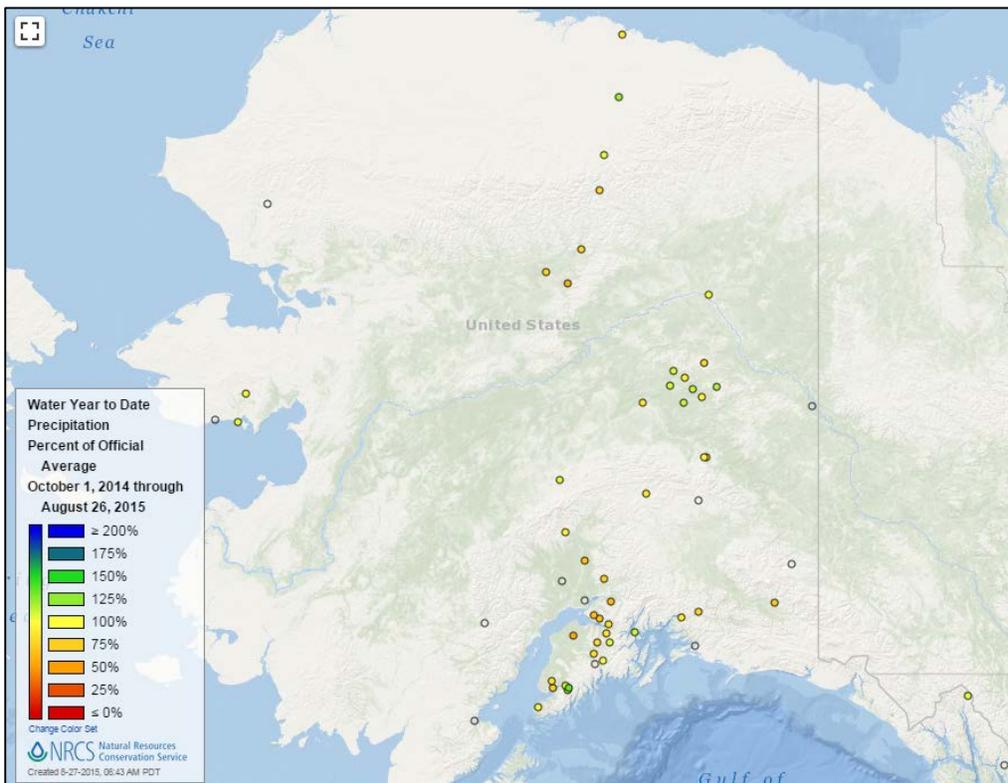
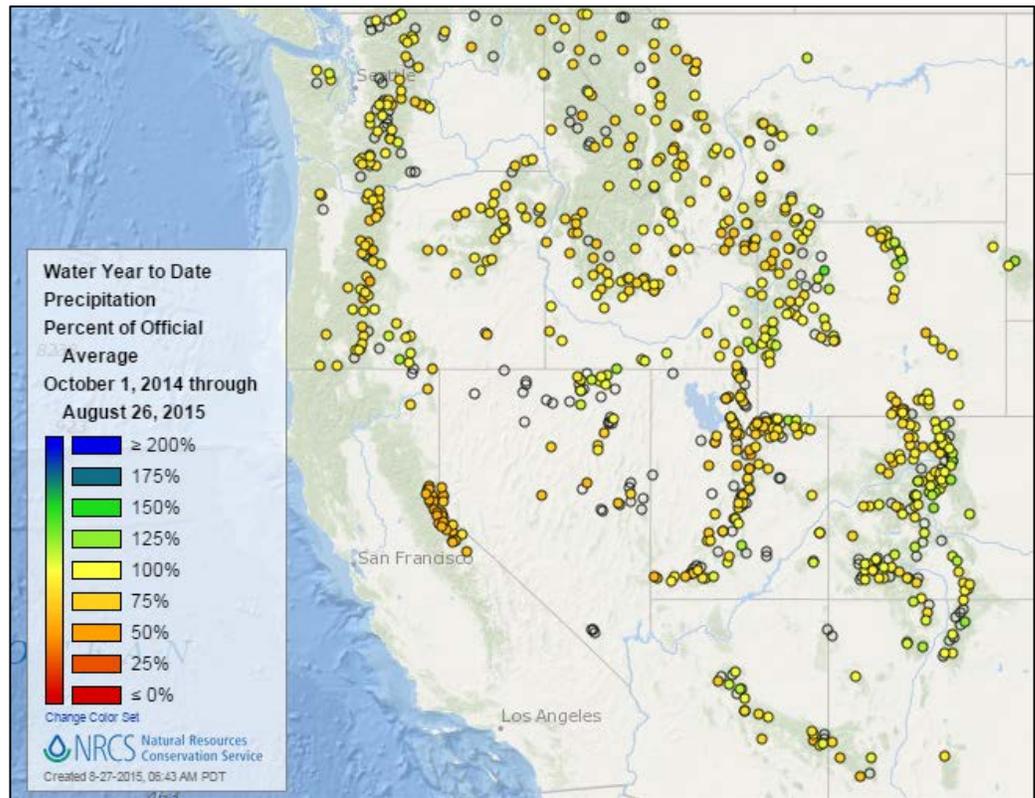
For the month of August to date, the national [total precipitation percent of average](#) pattern reveals much higher than normal precipitation in the central West and the Midwest. The Pacific Northwest, western California, and south-central areas of the country remained mostly dry.



The [total precipitation](#) map shows significant precipitation especially in the central Plains, the Southeast, and Florida. In contrast, dry conditions prevailed along the West Coast and south-central areas of the U.S.

Water Year-to-Date, Western Mountain Sites (NRCS SNOTEL)

For the [2015 Water Year](#) that began on October 1, 2014, large fluctuations throughout the year have now evened out to make most areas of the West near normal, with the exception of the central Sierra Nevada, which remains below average.



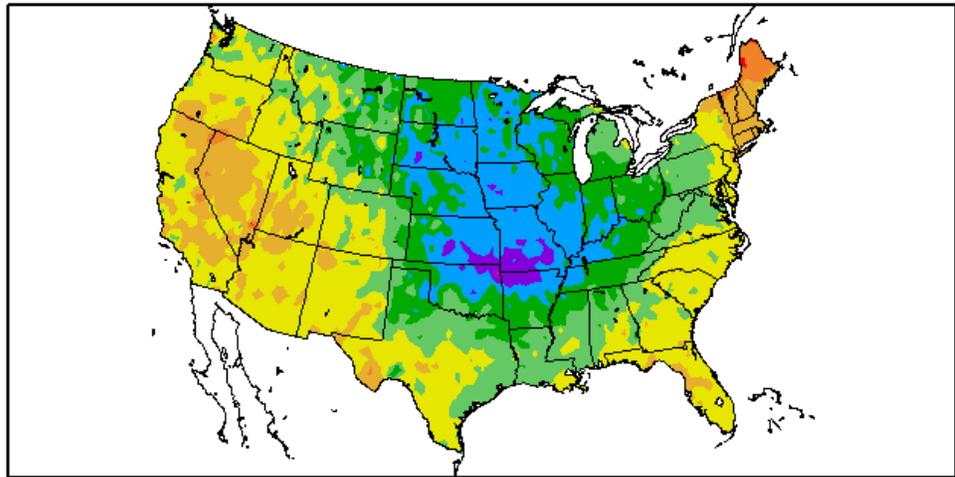
The Alaska [water year-to-date precipitation percent of average](#) map shows mostly near to below average conditions.

## Temperature

### Last 7 Days, National Weather Service (NWS) Networks

#### Departure from Normal Temperature (F) 8/20/2015 – 8/26/2015

The map of the [average temperature anomalies](#) for the past week indicates warmer than normal temperatures in the West, Southwest, Southeast, and Northeast, with much cooler than normal conditions in the center of the country.

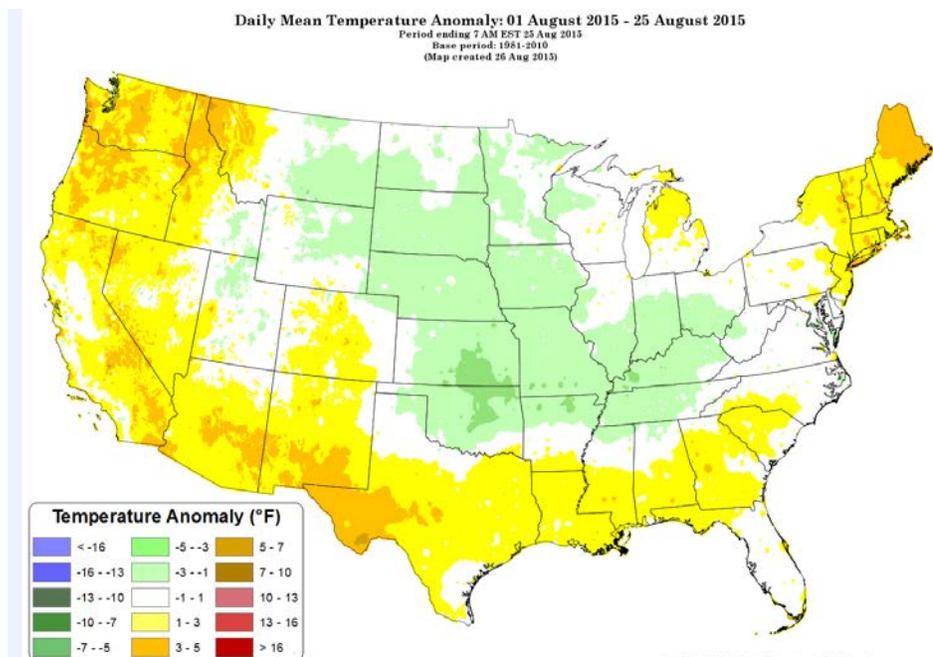


Generated 8/27/2015 at HPRCC using provisional data.

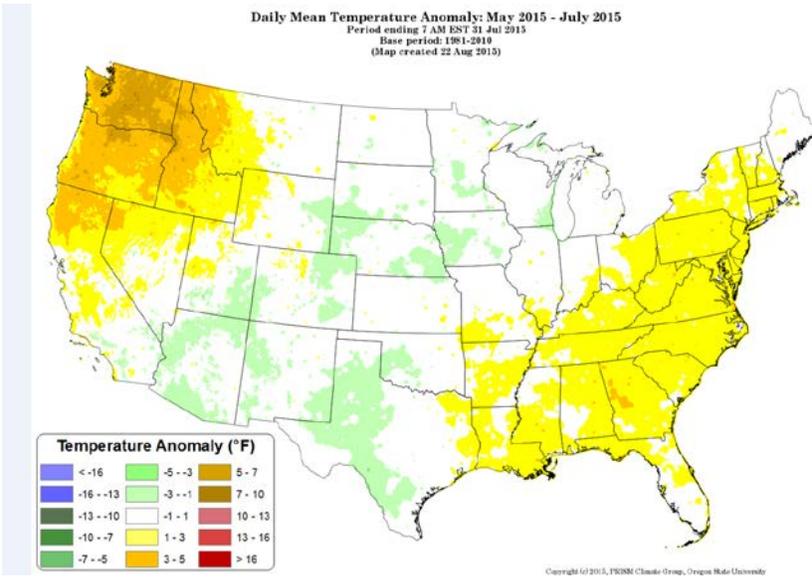
Regional Climate Centers

### Month-to-Date, PRISM Preliminary, All available data including SNOTEL and NWS

For August 2015 to date, the national [daily mean temperature anomaly](#) map shows warm temperatures in the west, northeast, and south-central U.S., with slightly cool temperatures in the Midwest.



Last 3 Months, PRISM Preliminary

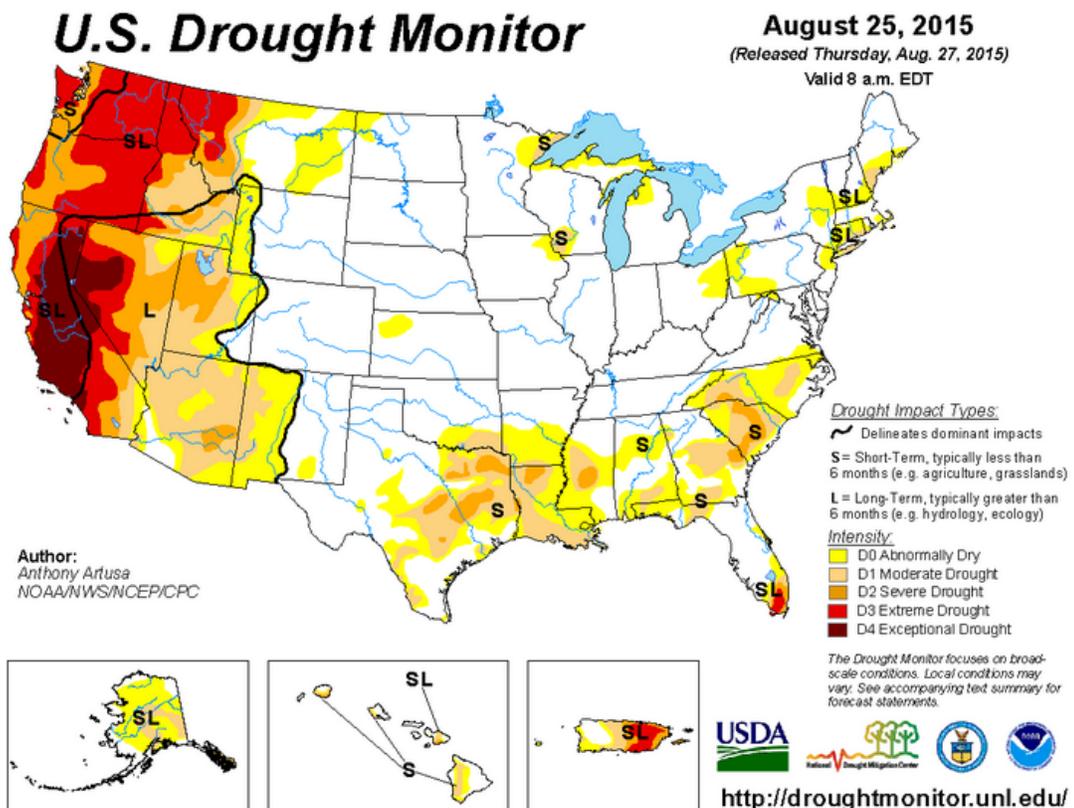


The May through July national [daily mean temperature anomalies](#) for the U.S. show the Pacific Northwest and the Southeast had the largest temperature departures above normal. The remainder of the country was mostly near average.

Drought

[U.S. Drought Portal](#) Comprehensive drought resource

[U.S. Drought Monitor](#) See map below. Exceptional levels of drought continue in California and Nevada. To view regional drought conditions, select a region on the map. State maps are available from regional maps.



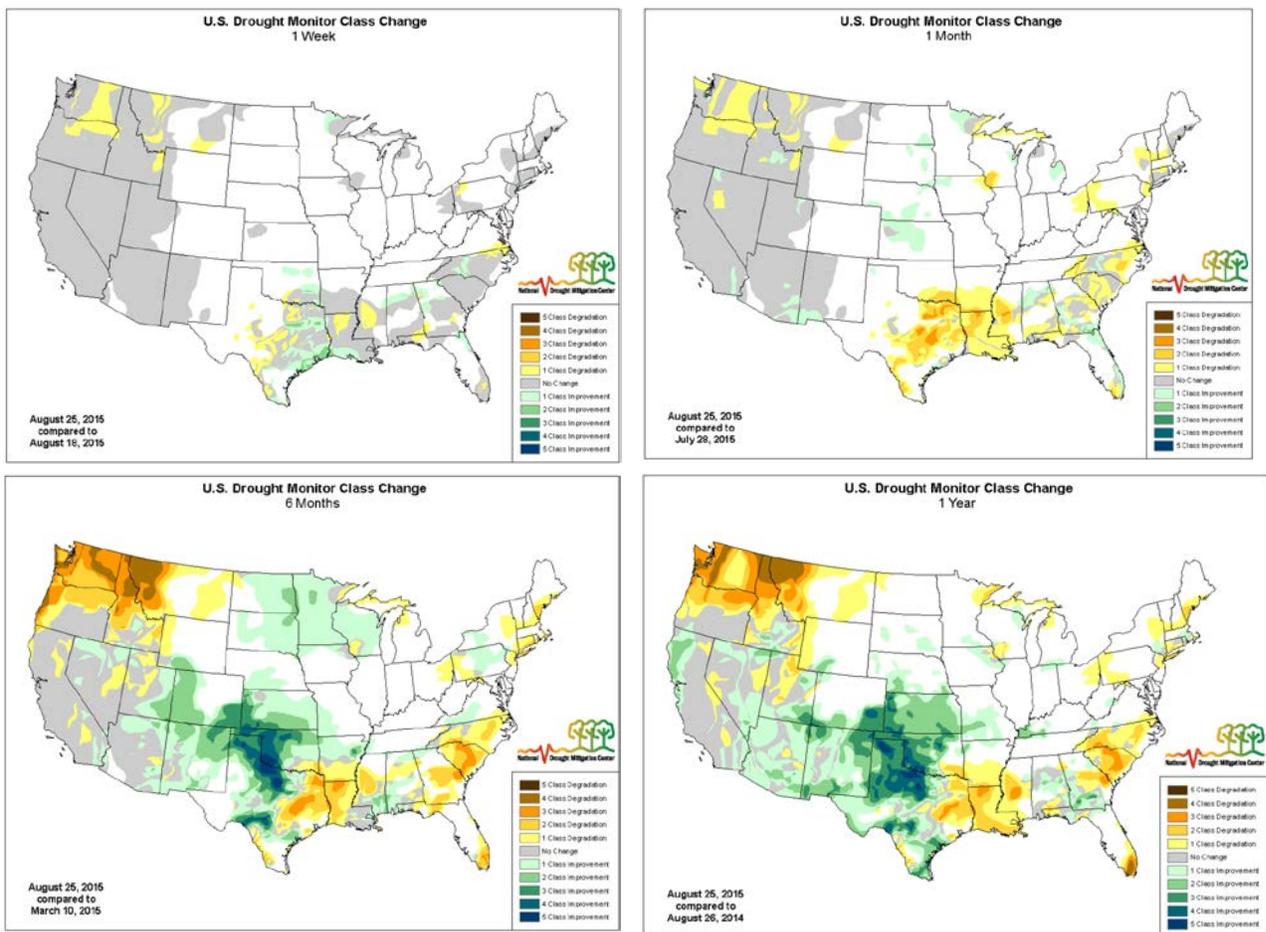
## Current National Drought Summary, August 25, 2015

Author: Anthony Artusa, NOAA/NWS

“A significant upper-level trough over the central part of the contiguous U.S., accompanied by a slowly moving cold front, brought up to several inches of rain across the eastern and southern states during the past week. The cold front reached the Eastern Seaboard and continued out over the western Atlantic, while the southern portion of this front stalled across the Deep South. Later in the week, another upper-level trough moved out of central Canada across the northern High Plains of the United States, before heading east and bringing additional rainfall to the eastern contiguous U.S. In the Southwest, light to moderate precipitation (generally less than 1.5 inches) was observed in association with the summer monsoon. In the northern Rockies and Pacific Northwest, the USDA Forest Service reported approximately 40 large wildfires in progress as of August 26th, as warm and very dry weather persisted.”

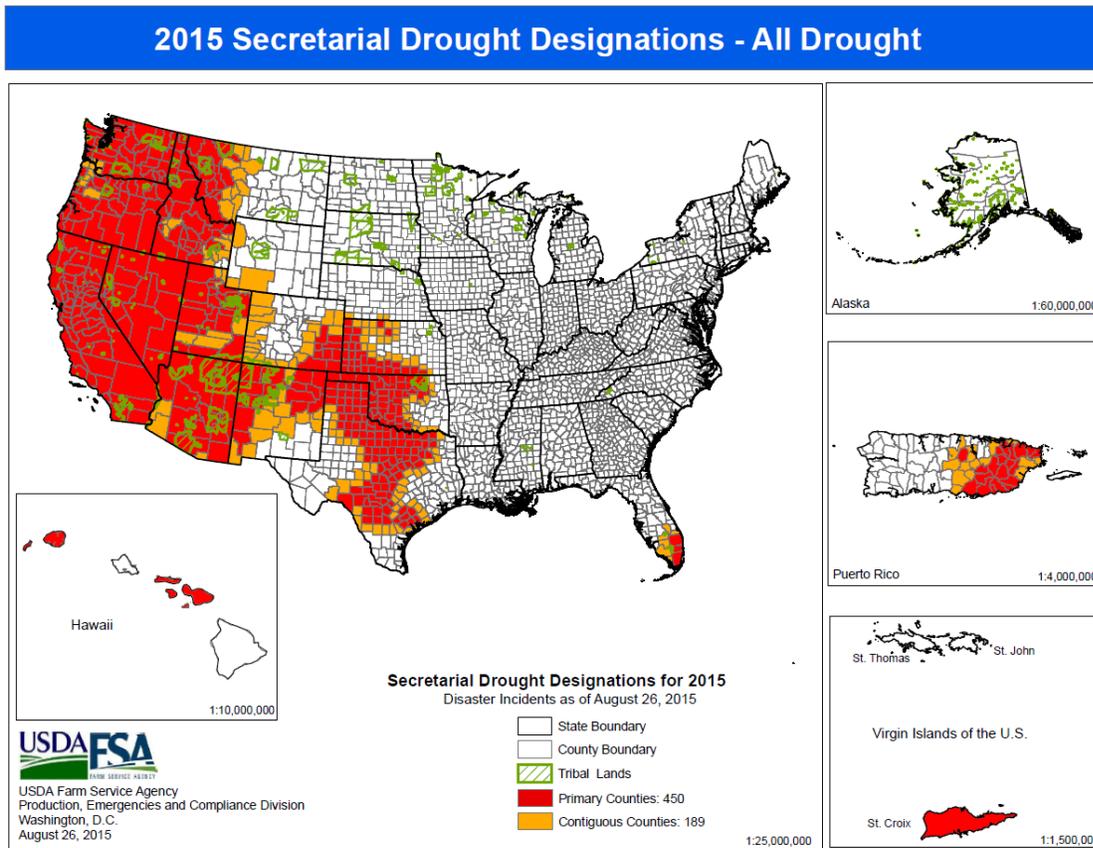
Detailed regional drought narratives for the last week are [here](#).

## Changes in Drought Monitor Categories over Time



Intensifying dry conditions are particularly notable in the Northwest and in the South. Conditions have improved significantly in the southern Great Plains and parts of the Southwest.

## 2015 USDA Drought Designations



[Drought Designations as of August 26, 2015](#)

U.S. Virgin Islands added to Secretarial Drought Designation map.

[USDA Disaster and Drought Information](#)

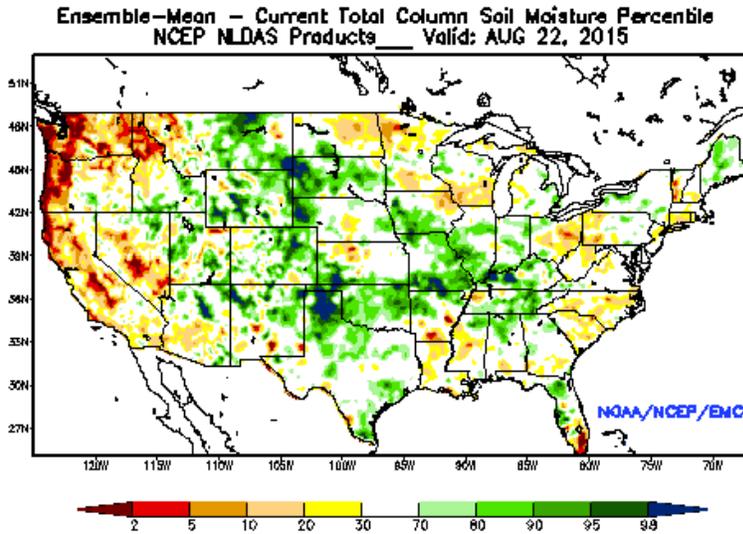
[U.S. Population in Drought, Weekly Comparison](#)

## Highlighted Drought Resources

- [Drought Impact Reporter](#)
- [Quarterly Regional Climate Impacts and Outlook](#)
- [U.S. Drought Portal Indicators and Monitoring](#)

## Other Climatic and Water Supply Indicators

### Soil Moisture

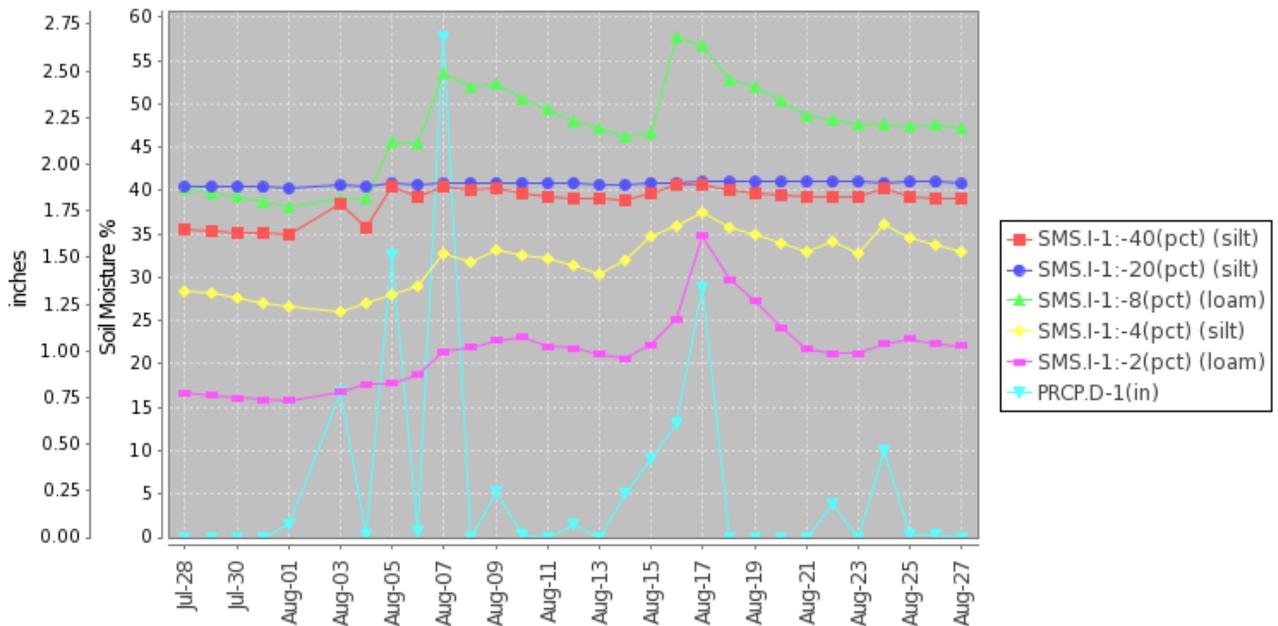


The modeled [soil moisture percentiles](#) as of August 22, 2015 show significant dryness in the West, the north-central part of the country, the Northeast, and parts of the Southeast. Areas of above normal soil moisture include much of the Rocky Mountains, the central Great Plains, and the Midwest.

[University of Washington Experimental Modeled Soil Moisture](#)

### Soil Moisture Data: NRCS [Soil Climate Analysis Network \(SCAN\)](#)

Station (2045) MONTH=2015-07-28 (Daily) NRCS National Water and Climate Center - Provisional Data - subject to revision  
Thu Aug 27 07:55:24 PDT 2015

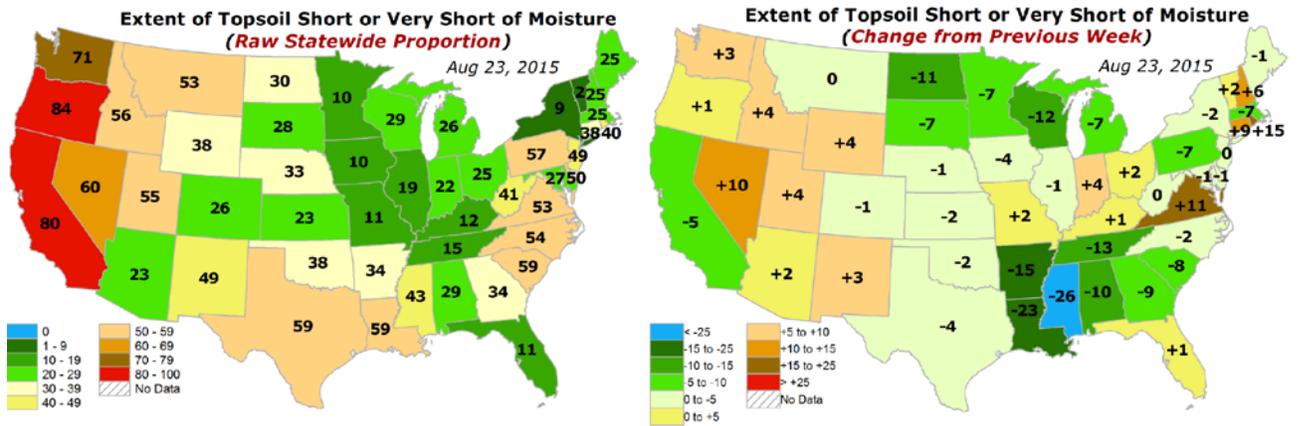


This example NRCS graph shows soil moisture (2, 4, 8, 20, and 40 inch depth) and precipitation for the last month at the [Guilarte Forest SCAN site](#) (station number 2045) in Puerto Rico. Multiple precipitation events generated corresponding soil moisture response with drying between events. Presently, much of eastern Puerto Rico is under drought conditions.

### Soil Moisture Data Portals

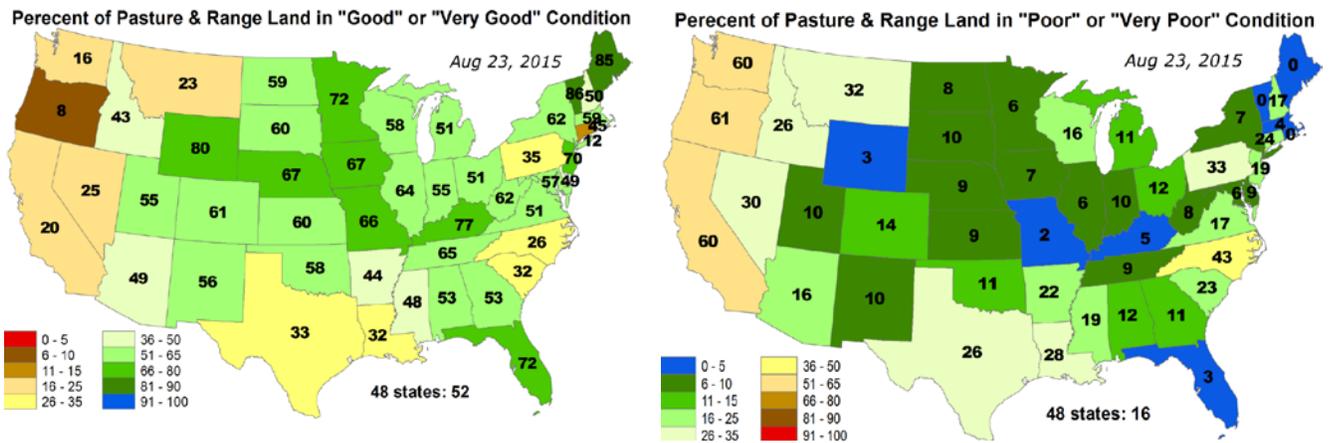
- [CRN Soil Moisture](#)
- [Texas A&M University North American Soil Moisture Database](#)

Topsoil



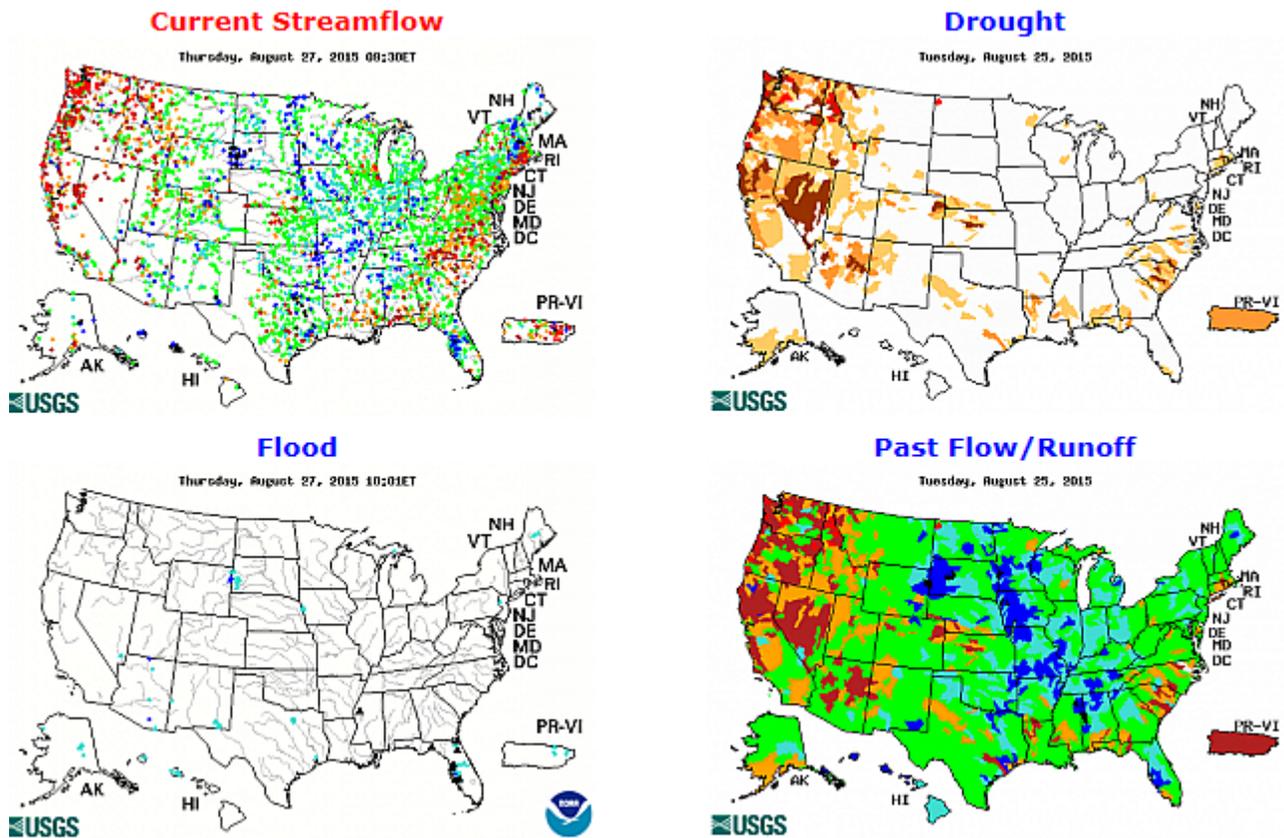
Low [topsoil moisture](#) conditions are especially notable all along the West Coast.

Pasture and Rangeland



[Pasture and rangeland](#) conditions are generally good except on the West Coast.

## Streamflow



[Streamflow](#) remains below normal in the West and parts of the Southeast, whereas it is above normal in the central part of the country. From the USGS web site, select any individual map to enlarge and display a legend.

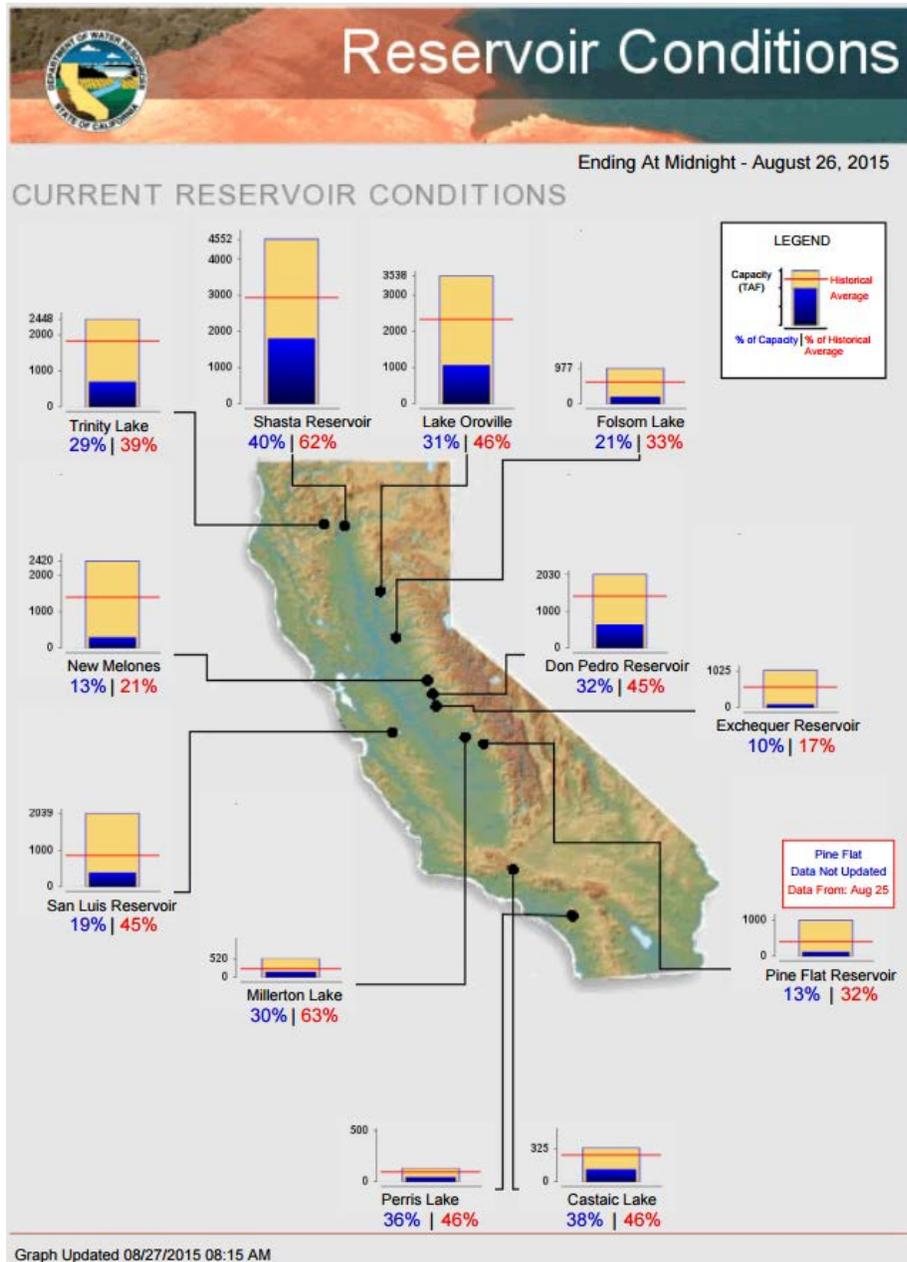
## Current Reservoir Storage

[National Water and Climate Center Reservoir Data](#)

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Hydromet Tea Cup Reservoir Depictions:

- [Upper Colorado](#)
- [Pacific Northwest/Snake/Columbia](#)
- [Sevier River Water, Utah](#)
- [Upper Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas](#)

California Reservoir Conditions



## Short- and Long-Range Forecasts

### Agricultural Weather Highlights

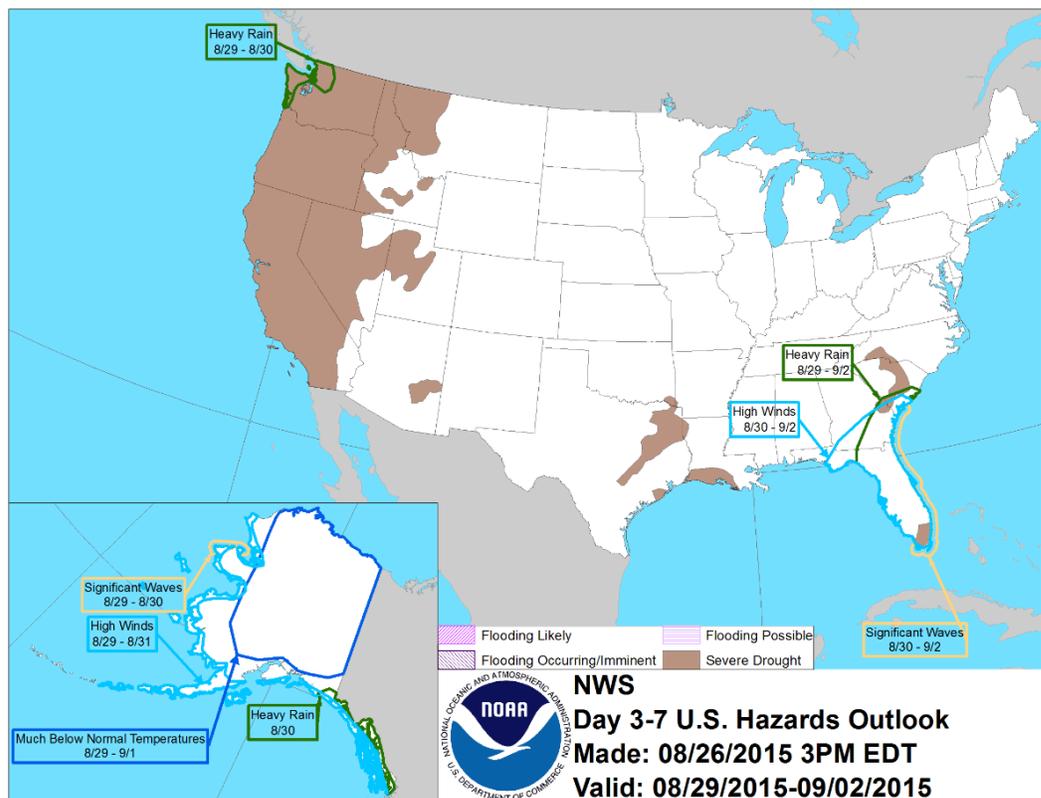
Author: Eric Luebehusen, USDA Agricultural Meteorologist

**Outlook, August 27, 2015:** “High pressure will maintain dry conditions across the eastern half of the nation, though scattered showers and thunderstorms are possible in the afternoon heat across the Southeast. Meanwhile, an upper-air disturbance will generate locally heavy rain from the central Rockies into the western Corn Belt and central Great Lakes. Heat will prevail over the Plains, with temperatures approaching or topping 100°F in northern portions of the region. Monsoon showers will linger over the Four Corners Region, while showers associated with a slow-moving cold front will arrive by week’s end over the northern Pacific Coast. By the end of the weekend and into early next week, Tropical Storm Erika — currently located 85 miles west of Guadeloupe — may pose a threat to the Southeast and southern Mid-Atlantic States. The NWS 6- to 10-day outlook for September 1 – 5 calls for above-normal temperatures east of the Rockies to contrast with cooler-than-normal conditions over the western quarter of the nation. Above-normal rainfall is expected from the Pacific Northwest into northern Minnesota as well as the coastal Southeast, while drier-than-normal conditions prevail in New England and in the south-central U.S.”

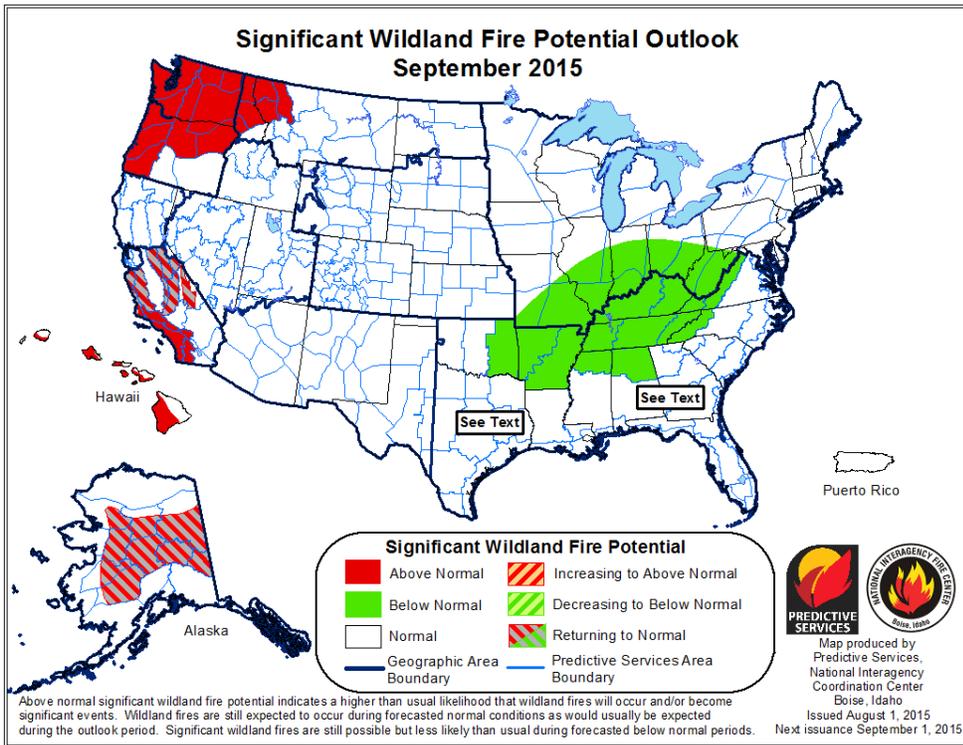
### National Weather Hazards

The outlook for [weather hazards](#) over the next week includes heavy rain in Washington, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. High winds are forecast for the Southeast. Severe drought remains in the far West.

In Alaska, cold temperatures are forecast, as well as heavy rain in the southeast part of the state. Significant waves are predicted along the northwest coast and high winds in the west.

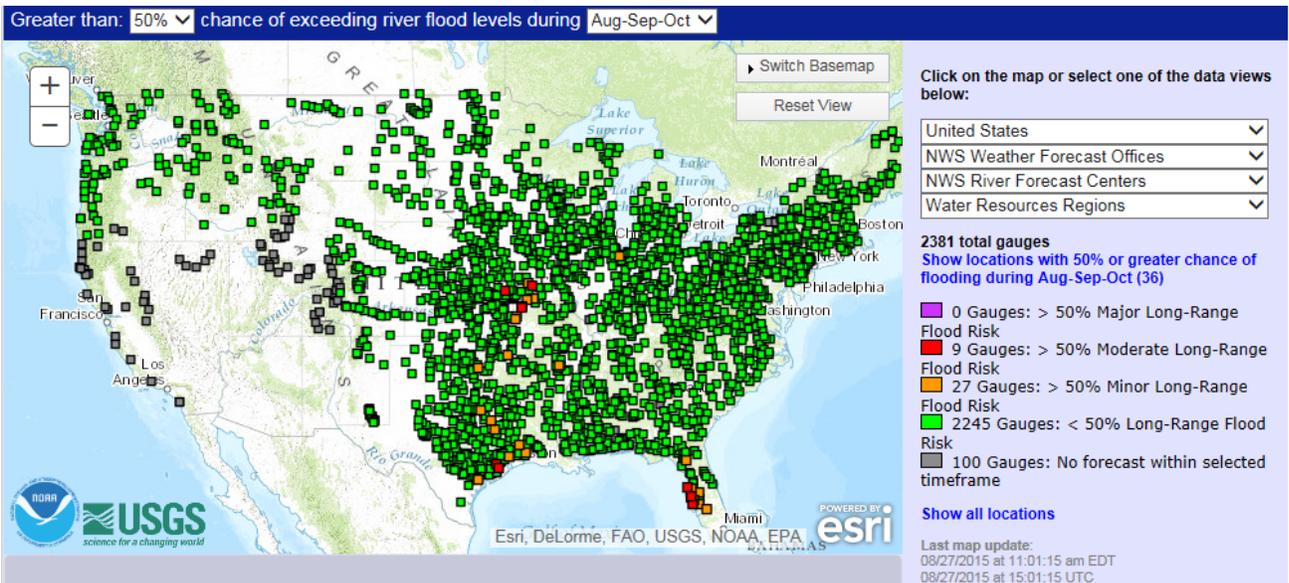


Fire Potential Outlook: September 2015



In September, above normal [fire potential](#) exists in the Pacific Northwest, California, Alaska, and Hawaii.

Long-Range Flood Outlook



During the next three months, there is some [flooding potential](#) primarily in the central part of the country and Florida.

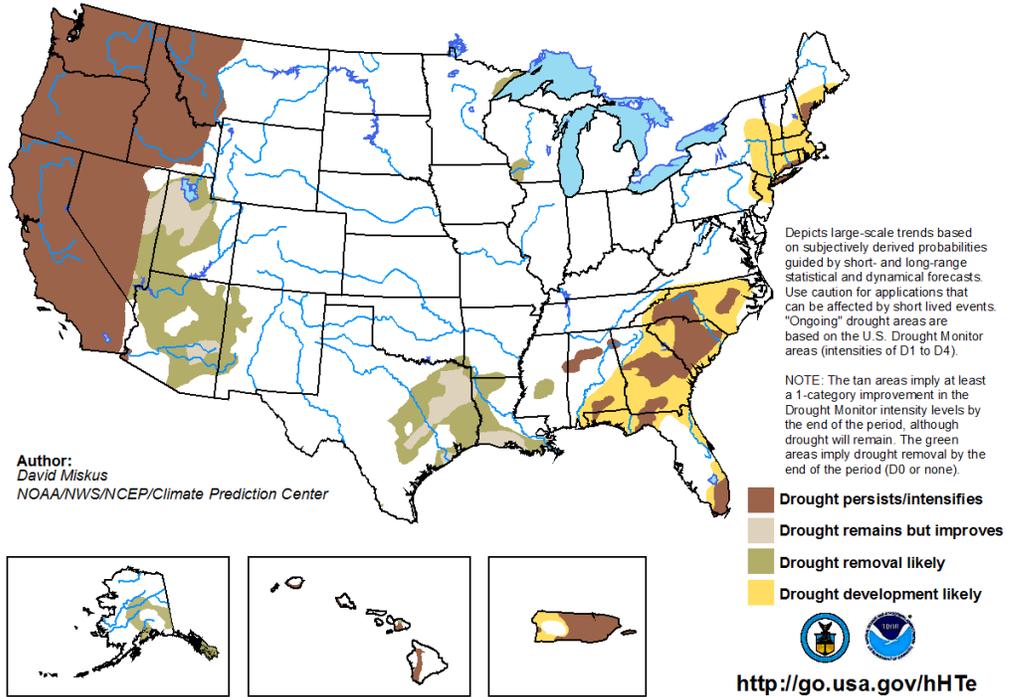
**Seasonal Drought Outlook**

During the next three months, **drought** will persist over the far West.

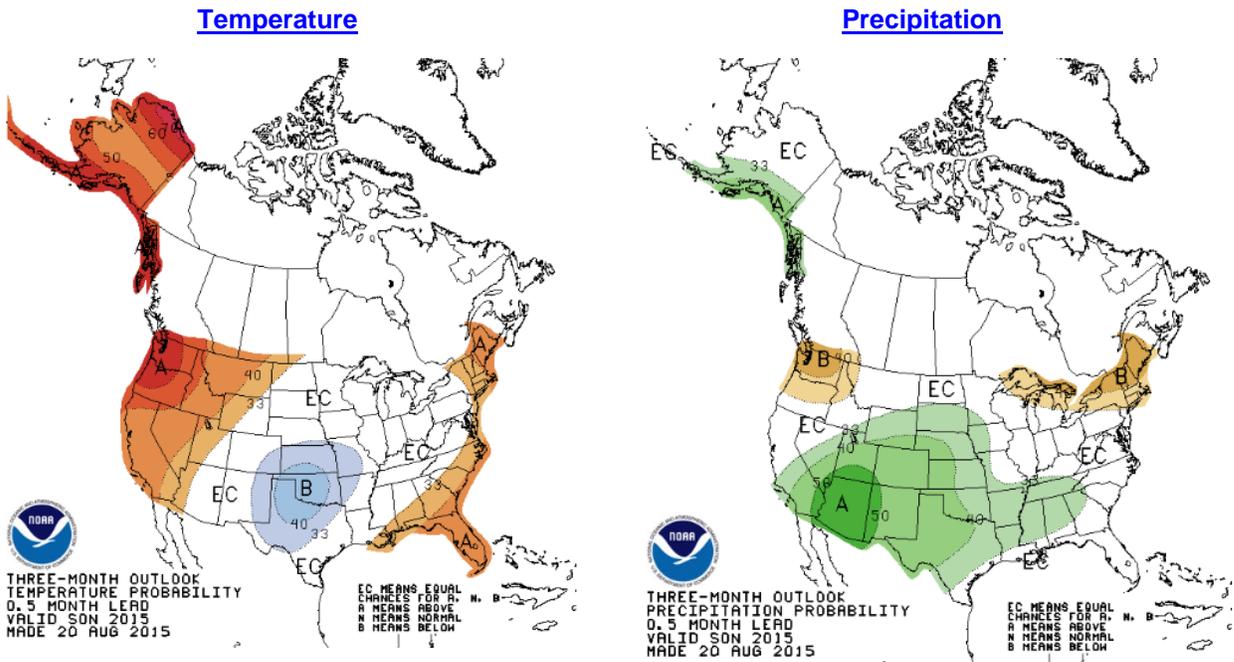
Drought remains, but is improving, in parts of eastern Nevada, Utah, Alaska, and Texas.

Drought development is likely over the Northeast and the Southeast.

**U.S. Seasonal Drought Outlook** Valid for August 20 - November 30, 2015  
Drought Tendency During the Valid Period Released August 20, 2015



**Climate Prediction Center 3-Month Outlook**



During **September-November**, there is enhanced probability of above normal temperatures in the West, Alaska, and the east coast, whereas below normal temperatures are likely in the southern Great Plains and the Midwest. Enhanced probability for above normal precipitation is predicted for the Southwest, the central part of the country, and south coastal Alaska, with below normal precipitation in Washington, the Great Lakes area, and the Northeast.

## More Information

The NRCS [National Water and Climate Center](#) publishes this weekly report. We welcome your feedback. If you have questions or comments, please [contact us](#).